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SUBJECT: TRAVEL WARNING - YEMEN

¶1. This Travel Warning updates information on security incidents in Yemen and reminds U.S. citizens of the high security threat level in Yemen due to terrorist activities. The Department of State has authorized the departure of non-emergency personnel and eligible family members of the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a.

The Department recommends that American citizens defer non-essential travel to Yemen. U.S. citizens remaining in Yemen despite this warning should monitor the U.S. Embassy website at <http://yemen.usembassy.gov> and should make contingency emergency plans. This supersedes the Travel Warning for Yemen issued August 13, 2008.

¶2. The security threat level remains high due to terrorist activities in Yemen. On September 17 at approximately 9:15 a.m. local time, armed terrorists attacked the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a, Yemen. A number of explosions occurred in the vicinity of the Embassy's main gate. Several Yemeni security personnel were killed, as were a few individuals waiting to gain entry to the Embassy.

¶3. U.S. embassy employees have been advised to exercise caution when choosing restaurants, hotels or visiting tourist areas in Sana'a in order to avoid large gatherings of foreigners and expatriates. In addition, unofficial travel outside of the capital is not authorized at this time.

¶4. U.S. citizens who travel to or remain in Yemen despite this warning should exercise caution and take prudent security measures, including maintaining a high level of vigilance, avoiding crowds and demonstrations, keeping a low profile, varying times and routes for all travel, and ensuring travel documents are current. U.S. citizens in Yemen are advised to exercise particular caution at locations frequented by foreigners countrywide including restaurants and hotels. From time to time, the Embassy may restrict official Americans from restaurants, hotels,

or shopping areas. The Department of State strongly encourages U.S. citizens to consult the most recent Warden Messages

(<http://yemen.usembassy.gov/service.html>)

to get up-to-date information on security conditions. U.S. citizens who believe they are being followed or threatened while driving in urban centers should proceed as quickly as possible to the nearest police station or major intersection and request assistance from the officers in the blue-and-white police cars stationed there.

¶15. The Department remains concerned about possible attacks by extremist individuals or groups against U.S. citizens, facilities, businesses, and perceived interests. On January 17, 2008, suspected al-Qa'ida operatives ambushed a tourist convoy in the eastern Hadramout Governorate, killing two Belgians. On July 2, 2007, suspected al-Qa'ida operatives carried out a vehicle-borne explosive device attack on tourists at the Belquis Temple in Marib, which resulted in the deaths of eight Spanish tourists and two Yemenis. The targeting of tourist sites by al-Qa'ida may represent an escalation in terror tactics in Yemen. On February 3, 2006, 23 convicts, including known affiliates of al-Qa'ida, escaped from a high-security prison in the capital city, Sana'a, some of whom remain at large. Two of the escapees were later killed in vehicle-based suicide attacks on oil facilities near Mukalla and Marib on September 15, 2006. Those attacks were followed by the arrest the next day in Sana'a of four suspected al-Qa'ida operatives, who had stockpiled explosives and weapons.

¶16. Since January 2007, the Government of Yemen has been battling al-Houthi rebels in and around the northern governorate of Saada. While foreigners have not been

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targeted, hundreds of soldiers and civilians have been killed in the violence. U.S. citizens traveling in Yemen should be aware that local authorities occasionally place restrictions on the travel of foreigners to parts of the country experiencing unrest. In addition, the U.S. Embassy itself often restricts travel of official personnel to the tribal areas north and east of Sana'a, such as the governorates of Amran, Al Jawf, Hajja, Marib, Saada, and Shabwa. Travelers should be in contact with the Embassy for up-to-date information on such restrictions.

¶17. U.S. citizens should register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a and enroll in the warden system (emergency alert network) to obtain updated information on travel and security in Yemen. This can be done online prior to arrival in Yemen at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs>.

¶18. The U.S. Embassy is located at Dhahr Himyar Zone, Sheraton Hotel District, P.O. Box 22347. The telephone number of the Consular Section is (967) (1) 755-2000, extension 2153 or 2266. The fax number is (967) (1) 303-1175. The after-hours emergency number is (967) (1) 755-2000 (press zero for extension) or (967) 733213509. From time to time the Embassy may temporarily close or suspend public services for security reasons. Emergency assistance to U.S. citizens during non-business hours (or when public access is restricted) is available through Embassy duty personnel.

¶19. Current information on travel and security in Yemen may be obtained from the Department of State by calling 1-888-407-4747 within the United States and Canada or, from outside the United States and Canada, 1-202-501-4444. U.S. citizens should consult the Country Specific Information for Yemen and the Worldwide Caution on the Department's Internet site at <http://travel.state.gov>. Up-to-date information on security conditions can also be addressed at <http://yemen.usembassy.gov/service.html>.

¶10. Minimize considered.

